



Town of Groton, Connecticut

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Town Clerk (860)441-6640
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Meeting Minutes - **Draft**

Representative Town Meeting

Moderator Natalie B. Billing, Representatives Joe Baril, Tom Barnhart, Lori Bartinik, Alicia Bauer, Genevieve Cerf, Michael Collins, Syma Ebbin, June Evered, Peter Fairbank, Robert Garcia, Patrice Granatosky, Dolores Harrell, Debra Jenkins, Carole McCarthy, Kevin McMahon, Richard Metayer, David Miner, Deborah Monteiro, James Moulding, Scott Newsome, Nora Patterson, Deborah Peruzzotti, Robert Post, Kevin Power, Don Pratt, Mary-Ellen Schefers, Eleanor Scussel, Jack Sebastian, Jennifer Smuts, Eleanor Steere, Fritz Stein, Joan Steinfeld, Irma Streeter, Mark Svencer, Patti Thunberg, Cheryl Tilney, Kevin Trejo, Tom Vivirito, Robert Walker Sr, and John Wheeler.

Wednesday, May 2, 2007

7:30 PM

Senior Center

ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING

A. ROLL CALL

Moderator Natalie Billing called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

30 members were present, and a quorum was declared.

The Moderator reported that Reps. Barnhart, Fairbank, Steere and Walker had called to say they would be absent.

Members Present: Moderator Billing, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Collins, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Evered, Rep. Garcia, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Metayer, Rep. Miner, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Power, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Tilney, Rep. Trejo, Rep. Vivirito and Rep. Wheeler, Jr.

Members Absent: Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. McMahon, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Post, Rep. Schefers, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Steere and Rep. Walker, Sr.

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Councilor Frank O'Beirne, Superintendent of Schools Dr. James Mitchell, Business Manager Hugh Hunter, members of the Board of Education, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

B. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The members observed a moment of silence followed by the Salute to the Flag led by Rep. Pratt.

C. CALL OF THE MEETING

Moderator Billing called the members' attention to the Call of the Meeting.

2007-0075 Annual RTM Budget Meeting

RESOLUTION SETTING RTM BUDGET MEETING DATE ON THE 2007-2008 ANNUAL TOWN BUDGET

WHEREAS, Section 8.4.3 of the Groton Town Charter requires that the Town Council determine the date for the annual budget meeting of the Representative Town Meeting, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Annual Budget Meeting of the Representative Town Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 2, 2007 at 7:30 p.m.
at the Groton Senior Center, Newtown Road (Route #117), Groton, Connecticut.

D. CITIZENS' PETITIONS

Lea Graner Kennedy, 152 Cedar Road, asked for full restoration of the Board of Education (BOE) budget request. She stated that the community needs to be fiscally responsible for the cost of education. She mentioned that the costs for the school building projects and the redistricting

should not influence the annual school budget. She noted that other communities in the region provide better support for their education budgets. Ms. Kennedy submitted a letter from Patricia Teskey who could not attend but supports the restoration of funds to a 3.1% increase for the BOE account.

Dick Glass, 132 Cedar Road, spoke against the increases of taxes at the local, State and Federal levels over the last six years. He is dissatisfied with the revaluation and stated that he will not be able to retire or stay in this town much longer. He believes that attracting new families and businesses is necessary for any town. He opposes the spending of money on a new animal shelter and favors a regional one. He opposes the contribution to the Eastern Connecticut Symphony. He mentioned that the Town and City governments should consider consolidation to reduce expenditures. He suggested that the salaries of Town employees and teachers be capped. He opposes providing health and retirement benefits to Town employees.

Julie Maisch, 60 Colony Road, requested continued support for the Eastern Connecticut Symphony as approved by the Council. She stressed that many residents enjoy the cultural experience afforded by a local Symphony. She mentioned that the School Strings program is a great benefit to children of this community.

Father Emmett Jarrett, 30 Broad Street, New London, requested that the RTM support the request for funding of the New London Homeless Hospitality Center as approved by the Council. He distributed a flyer that addresses the mission and many functions of the center. He stressed that it is a regional facility and that 11% of individuals served last year were from Groton. He mentioned that the Center provides more than shelter by assisting individuals to qualify for food stamps, veteran's benefits, and mental health assistance. It also assists clients in obtaining permanent housing.

Lisa Tess, 112 Mirra Drive, asked that the RTM support at least the 3.1% increase as approved by the RTM Education Committee but would prefer restoration of the 4% BOE budget request. She stated that education is of the utmost importance to families. She feels that having schools with good political and community support can attract many families such as those that are relocating to work at Pfizer. She mentioned that reducing the education budget year after year is a great deterrent to new families and a loss for the community. She noted that Groton has great recreation programs that her family would miss if they were to relocate to another town.

Beth Tillman, 925 River Road, Mystic, asked the members to support the request for the Eastern Connecticut Symphony. She noted that some residents are participants and many are patrons. She would like to see that this regional musical resource is supported.

Jennifer Sim, 309 Gold Star Highway, spoke in favor of the importance of education. She reviewed the BOE budget and found many unnecessary expenditures. She noted that spending more money may not help with achievement goals and suggested that funding is not being used efficiently. Ms Sim noted that she and other teachers were never without the proper supplies and teaching materials needed in the classroom.

E. RECEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS

The Moderator addressed some of the confusion that arose surrounding the Animal Shelter. She stated that the RTM will not be acting on the CIP for the Animal Shelter as part of the budget process. She noted that the RTM will act on this when a referral by the Council has passed by following the process for a referendum.

She noted that she received several e-mails requesting the RTM not to restore funds to the BOE budget.

The Moderator asked the Town Clerk to clarify the situation regarding e-mails.

The Town Clerk spoke about Freedom of Information concerning e-mails. She cautioned members that using e-mail and forwarding to other members may become a legal meeting and may violate certain laws. She stated that the office tries to comply with the request of members to keep their e-mail addresses confidential but some members' e-mails may have been distributed to the public accidentally. She apologized if this has happened.

F. BUDGET UPDATE/DISCUSSION

The Town Manager reported on the changes to the Town's projected revenue since the budget went to the printer. He explained that revenue sources are constantly changing. He stated that the largest unknown revenue is what the Town will receive from the State. He hopes that the State budget is finalized by the end of May but noted that it could run over into June. He commented that under the Governor's proposal the Town should receive \$200,000 more this year in aid. Mr. Oefinger commented that the phase-in of the revaluation doesn't affect the Town's budget but does impact the mill rate.

The Town Manager addressed the process concerning the CIP accounts for Senior Center Expansion and Animal Shelter. He explained that at this point both projects are proposed for a bond referendum and will follow the procedure outlined in the Town Charter. He announced that the Council has set a date of May 15, 2007 for the public hearing on the Senior Center Expansion. He reported that the Animal Shelter has not proceeded that far yet. He emphasized that there is no need for the RTM to consider either of these projects during the annual budget meeting. The Moderator commented on a memo she had just received concerning the break down of state aid that may be forthcoming to the Town. The Town Manager provided an explanation of the memo.

In response to Rep. Cerf, the Town Manager explained the budget summary worksheets.

Dr. James Mitchell provided a Powerpoint presentation addressing previous questions from the RTM regarding the BOE budget.

In response to Rep. Moulding, Dr. Mitchell stated that the BOE increased the high school standard graduation requirements to four years of math and science credits for the incoming freshman class. He noted that this change in standards was desired by the BOE and is not yet State mandated. He mentioned that the restoration of funds recommended by committee includes the two teacher positions necessary to implement the new requirements. He stated that the BOE is elected to work for the best education for the children of this community and that the Council and RTM are elected to oversee the funding.

In response to Rep. Thunberg, RTM Education Chairman Patterson stated that there are 64 students in the Advanced Placement Program (APB) and 151 in the International Baccalaureate Program (IBP) programs.

Rep. Trejo suggested that Dr. Mitchell attend the RTM meetings more frequently to provide updates and to answer any concerns. He stated that residents who view from home would also benefit by being more informed.

Rep. Sebastian commented that Dr. Mitchell and Board of Education have no measurable goals. He wants concrete numbers and facts on achievement and testing. He stated that he will not vote to raise the Board of Education budget since he opposes the salaries of the teachers.

Moderator Billing reiterated that it has been suggested that the BOE have more dialogue with the RTM throughout the calendar year.

In response to Rep. Evered, Dr. Mitchell explained that Catherine Kolnaski School was accepted by the State as an intradistrict magnet school to help solve the racial imbalance in our district. Rep. Garcia requested that Dr. Mitchell provide the number of students with disabilities that are

taking the mandatory testing, rather than citing a percentage.
Dr. Mitchell stated he will report back to the RTM with that information.

The Moderator informed the members that the information on the budget summary sheets provide the figures which have been approved by the Council and recommended by the RTM Committees. She stated that with the exception of the Education account, all committees recommended what was approved by the Council.

A motion to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. to a time definite Thursday May 3, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. was made by Rep. Trejo, seconded by Rep. Miner and so voted unanimously.

Budget Session - Thursday May 3, 2007

Moderator Natalie Billing called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

30 members were present, and a quorum was declared. (Reps. Evered and Newsome arrived later.)

The Moderator stated that Reps. Barnhart, Collins, Ebbin and Thunberg had reported they would be absent.

Members Present: Moderator Billing, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bartnik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Evered, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Garcia, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Metayer, Rep. Miner, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Power, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steere, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Trejo, Rep. Vivirito and Rep. Wheeler, Jr.

Members Absent: Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Collins, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. McMahon, Rep. Post, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Scheffers, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Tilney and Rep. Walker, Sr.

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Information Technology Supervisor Brian Hancock, Manager Emergency Communications Joseph Sastre, Manager Labor Relations/Risk Mgmt Joyce Sauchuck, Town Treasurer Cindy Landry, Tax Collector Nancy Dytko, Assessor John Philip, Purchasing Agent John Piacenza, Planning & Development Director Michael Murphy, Economic/Community Development Specialist Barbara Strother, Registrars of Voters Vicki Rossman and Allen Palmer, Probate Judge Fred Palm, Town Police Chief Kelly Fogg, Manager of Inspection Services Kevin Quinn, City Mayor Dennis Popp, City Police Chief Bruno Giuliani, City Finance Director Anthony Timpano, Groton Long Point Association Representatives Rick Crolius and Bob Congdon, SEAT Representatives Charlie Kosloskey, Pete Jones and Mark McClellan, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, Deputy Town Clerk Janet Downs and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

G. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Rules & Procedures Committee

Chairman Fritz Stein read the minutes from the meeting held on April 16, 2007. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Monteiro, seconded by Rep. Miner and so voted unanimously.

(Rep. Evered arrived at this point in the meeting.)

Account 1003 - Voter Registration

A motion for \$102,619 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Stein, seconded by Rep. Fairbank and so voted unanimously.

Account 1004 - Probate

A motion for \$19,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Stein, seconded by Rep. Garcia and so voted unanimously.

Account 1005 - Town Clerk

A motion for \$407,239 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Stein, seconded by Rep.

Trejo.

Items discussed were the difference between the Town Clerk's budget request and the Manager's request, the impact on the office of providing passport application services, and the local conveyance tax revenue projections.

The Town Clerk explained that she found other funding sources to offset \$3,000 of the original request.

Rep. Bartinik complimented the Probate and Town Clerk Offices for the phenomenal service that they provide. She said that the offices are always professional, hardworking and better than any of the area offices that she frequently visits.

The vote on \$407,239 carried unanimously.

Finance Committee

Chairman Patrice Granatosky read the minutes from the meetings held on April 26, and April 30, 2007. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Garcia.

Rep. Smuts requested a correction on the vote for Account 1013. She noted that she voted against the figure.

(Rep. Newsome arrived at this point in the meeting.)

The vote to accept the minutes as corrected carried unanimously.

Account 1006 - Legal Services

A motion for \$345,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Fairbank.

The postponement of the revaluation implementation was discussed.

The vote on \$345,00 carried unanimously.

Account 1010 - Executive Management

A motion for \$386,085 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Account 1013 - Finance Administration

A motion for \$1,379,529 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Fairbank.

The vote carried 29 in favor , 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Smuts)

Account 2120 - Revaluation Fund

A motion for \$8,500 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Svencer and so voted unanimously.

Account 1014 - Administrative Services

A motion for \$2,793,659 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Power.

Items discussed were emergency notification procedures, part time personnel, and the increase for professional development.

The vote on \$2,793,659 carried unanimously.

Account 6050 - Computer Replacement Fund

A motion for \$81,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Smuts.

Mr. Ackerman provided information on how this account functions.

The vote on \$81,00 carried unanimously.

Capital Item - Network Infrastructure Upgrade

A motion for \$72,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Svencer and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - CAD/RMS Software Implementation

A motion for \$270,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld.

Topics discussed were the process of researching and evaluating the software available, establishing criteria for the Town's needs, meeting current recommended government standards, and the problems with the Town's current software program.

The vote on \$270,000 carried unanimously.

Account 10260 - Groton Ambulance

A motion for \$79,565 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Trejo.

Items discussed were the billing for transport, reimbursement by insurance and Medicare, and individuals without insurance.

The vote on \$79,565 carried unanimously.

Account 10261 - Mystic River Ambulance

A motion for \$37,500 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Fairbank.

Items discussed were the difference in funding between Groton Ambulance and Mystic River, the number of ambulance calls, the increase in clients without insurance and the impact of Stoneridge in Stonington.

The vote on \$37,500 carried unanimously.

Account 10263 - LCL Emergency Planning Council

A motion for \$1,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Garcia.

The vote on \$1,000 carried 29 in favor, 1 opposed (Opposed: Rep. Scussell).

Total for Account 1026: \$118,065

Account 1070 - Insurance & Claims

A motion for \$586,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Svencer and so voted unanimously.

Account 1071 - Self Funded Plans

A motion for \$5,297,022 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky with a suggestion recommended by the Finance Director that \$156,700 be transferred from health insurance savings to Other Post Employee Benefits (OPEB). The motion was seconded by Rep. Monteiro.

Items discussed were health insurance savings, estimates of insurance costs, the development of OPEB, and the required contribution.

The vote on \$5,297,022 carried 29 in favor, 1 opposed (Opposed: Rep. Billing).

Account 10900 - City of Groton Police

A motion for \$2,243,924 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Garcia and so voted unanimously.

Account 10901 - City of Groton Highway

A motion for \$1,892,500 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Harrell and so voted unanimously.

Account 10902 - City of Groton School Crossing Guards

A motion for \$52,400 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Fairbank.

Chairman Granatosky explained the increase in this account from the City's original request. The new school is now scheduled for opening in December and this increase provides for the additional four months that crossing guards are needed at the two old schools.

Unemployment benefits were discussed.

The vote on \$52,400 carried unanimously.

Total for Account 1090: \$4,188,824

Account 10910 - Groton Long Point Police

A motion for \$203,500 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Garcia and so voted unanimously.

Account 10911 - Groton Long Point Highway

A motion for \$200,100 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Steinford and so voted unanimously.

Total for Account 1091: \$403,600

Account 1092 - Fire Districts PILOT

A motion for \$246,012 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Peruzzotti and so voted unanimously.

The Moderator announced a short recess at 8:35. The meeting resumed at 8:45 p.m.

Community & Economic Development Committee

Chairman Tom Vivirito read the minutes of the meeting held on April 25, 2007. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Account 1001 - Legislative Policy

A motion for \$59,390 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Trejo and so voted unanimously.

Account 1007 - Regional Agencies

A motion for \$99,720 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Svencer.

Issues addressed by Mr. McClellan of SEAT included extended hours of bus service, additional routes, bus shelters, operational costs for small buses versus large buses, and SEAT policy on maintaining their schedule.

The vote on \$99,720 carried unanimously.

Account 1046 - Planning & Development Services

A motion for \$1,207,794 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Monteiro.

Items discussed were the implementation of the recommendations of the Town's Strategic Plan, restructuring of the Planning Department in regard to Inspection employees, and the new revenue plan for fees.

Rep. Steinford thanked Mr. Quinn, Manager of Inspection Services for the enforcement of violations of the Town's Zoning Regulations. She disclosed that her husband is a member of the Planning Commission.

The vote on \$1,207,794 carried 29 in favor, 1 abstention (Abstaining: Rep. Moulding).

Capital Item - Submarine Capital of the World Sign

A motion for \$50,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Economic Assistance Fund

A motion for \$50,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Smuts.

MOTION TO AMEND the figure to \$0 was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Newsome. Rep. Granatosky feels that the contribution to this fund bypasses the process of RTM approval on projects that are funded from this account. She feels that this account is adequately funded and opposes any further contributions.

Rep. Power supports the original figure. He believes that the fund promotes development of new businesses in our community.

Rep. Newsome stated he is uncomfortable with the growth of this fund beyond the current balance of \$150,000 and he will oppose additional contributions to this account.

Mr. Murphy, Planning & Development Director provided information on the past use of this fund. The Town Manager reiterated Mr. Murphy's comments and added that the account may be used for necessary infrastructure improvements. It may reduce the timeline for development of new projects and streamline the process prior to Council approval.

Rep. Moulding supports the original figure and trusts the Town's administration to follow the current policy for use of money from this fund.

Rep. Monteiro expressed agreement with Reps. Power and Moulding.

Rep. Vivirito supports the original motion.

(Rep. Miner left during the discussion.)

The Moderator requested that members follow Robert's Rules which suggests that all comments should pertain to the issue being discussed and that members should refrain from personal comments.

In response to Rep. Peruzzotti, Mr. Murphy stated that this account could be used for projects identified in the Town's Strategic Plan and as a tool for long-term development.

MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION was made by Rep. Jenkins, seconded by Rep. Harrell. The vote on moving the question carried unanimously.

The vote on the Amendment of \$0 was defeated 8 in favor, 21 opposed. (In favor: Reps. Granatosky, Harrell, McCarthy, Metayer, Newsome, Patterson, Wheeler, Billing).

The vote on \$50,000 carried 21 in favor, 8 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Granatosky, Harrell, McCarthy, Metayer, Newsome, Patterson, Wheeler, Billing).

A motion to adjourn at 9:59 p.m. to a time definite Wednesday May 9, 2007 at 7:30 p.m was made by Rep. Trejo, seconded by Rep. Vivirito and so voted unanimously.

Budget Session - May 9, 2007

Moderator Natalie Billing called the meeting to order at 8:15 p.m.

36 members were present, and a quorum was declared.

Members Present: Moderator Billing, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bartnik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Collins, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Evered, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Garcia, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Metayer, Rep. Miner, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Power, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steere, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Tilney, Rep. Trejo, Rep. Vivirito, Rep. Walker, Sr. and Rep. Wheeler, Jr.

Members Absent: Rep. Barnhart, Rep. McMahon, Rep. Post, Rep. Pratt and Rep. Schefers

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Human Services Director Marge Fondulas, Police Chief Kelly Fogg, Deputy Chief Michael Crowley, Captain Steve Smith, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

Health & Social Services Committee

Chairman John Wheeler read the minutes of the meeting held on April 9, 2007. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Wheeler, seconded by Rep. Vivirito and so voted unanimously.

Account 1051 - Human Services

A motion for \$641,139 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Wheeler, seconded by Rep. Fairbank.

Items discussed were the interactions with the school children and counseling services provided to them, the programs developed and administered at the schools, BOE reimbursement to the department, the restructuring of the department due to four recent retirements, the overall reduction of department positions since 2003, the increase in clients, the impact of the casinos, the increase in caseloads assigned to a social worker, and the Career Closet.

Ms. Fondulas stated that the department now works on an appointment basis only. She added that the department does not have time to see walk-in clients that need assistance without an appointment. She commented on the responsibilities for the department relating to evictions and stated that discussions are ongoing to determine the most efficient manner for handling them. She mentioned that the community is fortunate to have public-donated funds matched by Groton Utilities and special fund donations that provide local assistance. She stated that the department and BOE have a great rapport and work cooperatively to help school children and their families utilizing the many programs that are available. She worries that ongoing programming may suffer in the future from the demands placed on the social workers.

The Town Manager stated that in light of the recent retirements he opted to provide more service for the case side of the department than for program development. He feels that some time will remain available for program development.

The Moderator clarified that although the members were expressing concern with the reduction of staff, the figure on the floor cannot be increased since the Manager and Council figure are the same.

The vote on \$641,139 carried unanimously.

Account 1054 - Health/Service/Cultural Agencies

A motion for \$1,336,848 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Wheeler, seconded by Rep. Walker.

Items discussed were the number of towns served by Ledge Light Health District, local business fees collected, and the transfer from the Public Works account.

The Town Manager stated that the transfer from Public Works reflects a change in the account allocation for the agreement with Pequot Gardens regarding sewer use payments.

The vote on \$1,336,848 carried unanimously.

Account 7320 - Human Services Assistance Fund

A motion for \$21,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Wheeler, seconded by Rep. Stein and so voted unanimously.

Public Safety Committee

Rep. Monteiro read the minutes of the meeting held on April 2, 2007. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Monteiro, seconded Rep. Garcia.

Rep. Trejo requested a correction to the minutes to reflect that he was present at the committee meeting.

The vote to accept the minutes as amended carried unanimously.

Account 1024 - Public Safety

A motion for \$6,255,992 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Monteiro, seconded by Rep. Walker.

Items discussed were regional communication compatibility, the impact of 22 retirements within the last five years, alternative patrol transportation, staff requirements, administrative costs and salary changes and staffing of the drug task force.

Chief Fogg stated that the impact from retirements is cyclical and should be leveling off. He noted that the Town's retention of officers for long periods of time reflects well on the Town. He reported that salary changes were based on new hires filling vacancies, more positions on the lower steps of the pay scale and the fact that some vacancies existed for several months during the current fiscal year.

The vote on \$6,255,992 carried 35 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Sebastian.)

A motion to adjourn at 9:22 p.m. to a time definite Thursday May 10, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. was made by Rep. Miner, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Budget Session - May 10, 2007

Moderator Natalie Billing called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

28 members were present, and a quorum was declared.

The Moderator reported that Reps. Barnhart, Garcia, Power, Pratt and Scussel had called to say that they would be absent.

Members Present: Moderator Billing, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Collins, Rep. Evered, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Metayer, Rep. Miner, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Tilney, Rep. Trejo, Rep. Vivirito, Rep. Walker, Sr. and Rep. Wheeler, Jr.

Members Absent: Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Garcia, Rep. McMahon, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Post, Rep. Power, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Schefers, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Steere and Rep. Streeter

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Public Works Director Gary Schneider, Assistant Director John Carrington, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Police Chief Kelly Fogg, Deputy Chief Michael Crowley, Deputy Town Clerk Janet Downs, and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

Public Works Committee

Chairman Michael Collins read the minutes of the meetings held on April 18 and April 25, 2007. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Harrell and so voted unanimously.

Account 1035 - Public Works

A motion for \$7,727,767 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Baril.

Items discussed were the BOE turnover of the schools to be closed to the Town, the stabilization costs of the schools, the delay in opening the two new schools, and the change in the Fleet Reserve account.

The Town Manager estimated in the budget that two schools would be deeded to the Town. He stated that due to BOE redistricting the number of schools being closed is now four. He mentioned that since two of the four are projected to be used for half of the school year, the estimated stabilization figure is an appropriate figure. Mr. Oefinger explained his logic for allocating all Fleet Reserve employees' costs to the Public Works account based on the fact that they are Public Works employees. He feels that the Fleet Reserve account should only reflect actual expenses for vehicle repair, maintenance and purchases.

MOTION TO AMEND the figure to \$6,982,721 was made by Rep. Sebastian, seconded by Rep. Moulding.

Rep. Sebastian believes that administrative and management overhead costs are too high, that the department has an excess of directors and support staff, and that the Engineering Division should

be reduced by 4%.

Items discussed were the number of snow events, overtime costs, compensatory time off in lieu of overtime, street light replacement, and minimum emergency call-in.

In response to Rep. Granatosky, the Town Manager commented that the budget was prepared at a level service increase and that he is unable to identify specific possible reductions at this meeting. He feels that the impact of this amendment would affect all cost centers and force reductions to services to outside agencies, personnel, snow removal and street light repair.

Mr. Oefinger verified that the increase of eight employees in the Public Works account is due to the transfer of Fleet Reserve employees with no promotions or demotions.

The vote on the Amendment of \$6,982,721 was defeated 2 in favor, 26 opposed. (In favor: Reps. Cerf, Sebastian).

The vote on \$7,727,767 carried 25 in favor, 2 opposed, 1 abstention. (Opposed: Reps. Cerf, Sebastian. Abstaining: Rep. Evered.)

Account 2020 - Sewer Operating Funds

A motion for \$5,073,927 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Svencer and carried 27 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Sebastian).

Account 2030 - Solid Waste Fund

A motion for \$2,755,336 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Fairbank and so voted unanimously.

Account 6040 - Fleet Reserve Fund

A motion for \$1,588,419 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Fairbank.

Items discussed were the purpose and operations of the fund, the criteria for vehicle replacement, the hybrid vehicles purchased with grant money last year, the golf course ATV vehicle, and the two methods utilized for purchasing vehicles.

The vote on \$1,588,419 carried unanimously.

Capital Item - Pavement Management Program

A motion for \$400,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Baril and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Improvement to Riverview Avenue

A motion for \$75,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Thames Street Rehabilitation

A motion for \$134,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Jenkins and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - New Sidewalk Construction Route 1

A motion for \$370,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Svencer.

Members discussed the complexity of this project that involves a major five-way intersection, a four lane highway, replacement of guard rails, night work, and police security.

The Town Manager stated that the work will be done by an outside contractor.

In response to Rep. Trejo, the Manager noted that many discussions have occurred concerning the number of accidents and ways to improve the safety at this major intersection.

The vote on \$370,000 carried unanimously.

Capital Item - Route 215 Sidewalk Replacement

A motion for \$50,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Baril and so voted unanimously.

The Moderator announced a brief recess at 8:35 p.m. The meeting resumed at 8:48 p.m.

Capital Item - New Sidewalk Construction - Thomas Road Bikeway

A motion for \$70,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Peruzzotti.

Items discussed were the reauthorization of this project, flood concerns, rights of way, easements, and the impact on construction of the proposed magnet school.

Planning & Development Director Mike Murphy reported that a site plan for the school was recently approved.

The vote on \$70,000 carried 26 in favor, 2 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Harrell, Billing.)

Capital Item - Police Station

A motion for \$205,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Svencer.

Items discussed were the expenditure for the conceptual design in 2006, architectural services, the specific modifications to the office spaces, preparing the bid specifications, the cost estimate for the design, specifications and cost estimate of construction for additional cells, concerns for suicide watch in the cell area, and sprinkler and other mechanical systems.

Rep. Sebastian stated that he feels the cost for renovating 1600 square feet of office space is too high and he will not support this.

The Town Manager clarified that projects that may be needed at specific Town facilities are identified on the one-page CIP list to clearly indicate them to the Council and RTM. He noted that future projects contemplated for the Police Station include a maximum security area and an improved ventilation system to protect against airborne disease.

The vote on \$205,000 carried 26 in favor, 2 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Sebastian, Billing.)

Capital Item - Town Hall Annex-Salt/Sand Storage

A motion for \$770,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Walker.

Items discussed were environmental issues on the current site, the design and specifications of the new facility, the funding of this project with Capital Reserve funds, the environmental impact of new salt to be used, the changes in snow removal routes, and reduced employee call-in.

Moderator Billing announced that she was stepping down from the podium in order to comment on this item, and Rep. Vivirito was Moderator Pro Tem for the remainder of discussion on this account.

Rep. Billing commented that she supports the project but has concerns about the funding. She would prefer that this project go to referendum for bonding.

MOTION TO AMEND the figure to \$0 was made by Rep. Billing, seconded by Rep. Sebastian. Rep. Cerf stated that this item should not be included with the Animal Shelter bond referendum. In response to Rep. Steinfeld, the Town Manager noted that the cost of this project would increase due to attorney fees, bonding costs, interest, and the cost of conducting a referendum. He stated that bonding is only necessary if the Town is borrowing more than \$750,000 and that the funds for this item are designated from Capital Reserve. He mentioned that some site work has been completed.

In response to Rep. Peruzzotti, the Manager commented that a referendum is only held when a

project is being bonded. He stated that by Town Charter a referendum cannot be held for public consensus.

The vote on the Amendment of \$0 was defeated 3 in favor, 25 opposed. (In favor: Reps. Evered, Sebastian, Billing.)

The vote on \$770,000 carried 25 in favor, 3 opposed. (Opposed Reps. Evered, Sebastian, Billing.)

Moderator Billing resumed chairing the meeting.

Capital Item - Town Hall Annex Complex Animal Shelter

The Moderator noted that no vote or discussion is necessary at this time since the project may go to referendum.

In response to Rep. Walker, the Town Manager explained that the \$25,000 approved several months ago was appropriated for the design of the shelter and a cost estimate.

Capital Item - Jabez Smith House

A motion for \$25,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Baril.

Chairman Collins explained that the reduced figure for this account is the same figure approved by the Council. It was felt that less maintenance could be done this year due to last year's expenditure.

The vote on \$25,000 carried 27 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Granatosky.)

Capital Item - Golf Course Facilities

A motion for \$30,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Baril.

The vote on \$30,000 carried 27 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Smuts.)

Capital Item - Senior Center

The Moderator commented that discussion is not appropriate at this time since this item will be referred to the RTM in preparation for a bond referendum.

Capital Item - Vacated School Properties-Reuse

A motion for \$10,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Fairbank.

The Town Manager explained that this money will be used to develop a plan for the schools that will be turned over to the Town. The plan will address the issues of establishing reuse of the buildings, conceptual plans, and marketing. It will also address the issue of maximizing the buildings as assets if they are retained by the Town.

MOTION TO AMEND the figure to \$50,000 was made by Rep. Bauer, seconded by Rep. Baril. Rep. Bauer feels that the account should be restored to the Manager's request so that the money is available to develop a complete plan for all four schools instead of the two schools intended for closure when the budget was prepared.

In response to Rep. Trejo, Rep. Patterson explained that the RTM Education committee is already recommending that the CIP Groton Heights account be reduced to \$0.

Rep. Smuts wanted viewers to be aware that Groton has not built a new school for many years, and does not close schools routinely.

In response to Rep. Smuts, the Town Manager noted that the Economic Assistance Fund is for infrastructure for new development; school reuse studies would not be an appropriate use of these funds.

The Town Manager stated that the BOE has scheduled Groton Heights School for closure on August 1, 2007. He mentioned that some interest has been expressed by the City of Groton and private developers in regard to Colonel Ledyard and Groton Heights. He suggested that Groton

Heights could augment the Fort Griswold museum or Bill Memorial Library and he has received one inquiry about Noank School. He confirmed that research of the deeds for these properties has been done and is now in the review process for any restrictions. He will report back when that information is available.

MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION was made by Rep. Harrell, seconded by Rep. Baril and so vote unanimously.

The vote on the Amendment of \$50,000 was defeated 5 in favor, 23 opposed. (In favor: Reps. Baril, Bauer, Jenkins, Metayer, Smuts.)

The vote on \$10,000 carried 24 in favor, 4 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Bauer, Jenkins, Metayer, Smuts.)

Capital Item - Mechanical/Electrical Equipment Replacement-WPCF

A motion for \$722,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Harrell.

The Town Manager noted that funding for this will come from sewer use fees.

The vote on \$722,000 carried unanimously.

Rep. Sebastian expressed his gratitude to fellow RTM members for their support for the Mystic River Homes tax abatement. He complimented the Town Manager and Mr. Vincent for doing the research on this item.

A motion to adjourn at 9:58 p.m. to a time definite Wednesday May 16, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. was made by Rep. Miner, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Budget Session - May 16, 2007

Moderator Natalie Billing called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

35 members were present, and a quorum was declared. (Reps. Bartnik and Collins arrived later.)

The Moderator reported that Reps. Cerf, Sebastian, and Schefers called to say they are unable to attend this meeting.

Members Present: Moderator Billing, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bartnik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Collins, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Evered, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Garcia, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Metayer, Rep. Miner, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Power, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steere, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Tilney, Rep. Trejo, Rep. Vivirito, Rep. Walker, Sr. and Rep. Wheeler, Jr.
Members Absent: Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Cerf, Rep. McMahon, Rep. Post, Rep. Schefers and Rep. Sebastian

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, School Superintendent Dr. James Mitchell, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds Wes Greenleaf, Business Manager Hugh Hunter, members of the Board of Education, Board of Education Administrative Staff, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

The Moderator announced that a Resolution Reappropriating Board of Education CIP Funds was referred from the Town Council under rule 6.5.3 with a return date of June 13, 2007. She referred this item to the RTM Education Committee. (This item was later reassigned to the Finance Committee.)

Education Committee

Chairman Patterson read the minutes of the meetings held on April 18 and April 25, 2007. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Rep. Patterson, seconded by Rep. Trejo and so voted unanimously.

Rep. Patterson disclosed that she is a Special Education Tutor at Fitch Senior High School.

(Rep. Bartinik arrived at this point in the meeting.)

Account 1080 - Education

A motion for \$70,181,230 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Patterson, seconded by Rep. Smuts.

MOTION TO AMEND the figure to \$70,000,000 was made by Rep. Fairbank, seconded by Rep. Svencer.

MOTION TO AMEND the figure to \$69,681,230 was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Thunberg.

Rep. Vivirito's rationale for the amended figure is his experience serving on the RTM, his feelings that the BOE is mismanaged, and the fact that the results are not adequate for the money spent. He reminded members that a resident who spoke under citizen petitions at the first budget session stated that the reason people choose not to live in Groton is because it is not affordable, not that the Town is not supporting education. He feels that the members need to support the residents of the Town with a sound economic policy. He requested members not to vote for the public watching but to vote for what is best for the schools, the Town and the taxpayers who elected them.

(Rep. Collins arrived at this time.)

Rep. Newsome stated he will support the second amendment which is the figure approved by the Town Council so that the savings from the schools that are closing will be realized by the Town. He stated that if the savings were used for additional education positions, that savings would be negated. He mentioned that the new positions would impact salary costs in future budgets.

Rep. Bartinik apologized for being late. She requested a correction to the Education Committee minutes to reflect that her comments were that the BOE could explore alternative ways to fill some positions, possibly utilizing volunteers, part-time personnel, or parents. She never suggested that anyone work for free.

Rep. Scussel stated she would support the second amendment due to declining enrollment since 2001.

Rep. Monteiro feels that the Town should realize the savings from any additional State funding over the projected budget figure as well as savings from the school closings. She will support the second amendment.

Dr. Mitchell clarified that the State Impact Aid funding is provided to the Town's General Fund and the Town then disburses the funds to the BOE based on the approved budget.

Rep. Streeter stated that she is a supporter of education but she feels that with the decreasing enrollment and continual increases in the education budget, she can not support the BOE.

Rep. Granatosky thanked the Education Committee for their hard work this year. She stated it is her belief that the committee is not "pro-Board of Education but pro-children". She requested that Rep. Fairbank state the rationale for his amendment.

Rep. Fairbank stated that his rationale was that this reduction reflects the savings from closing Groton Heights School and the fact that he does not agree with adding five library technician assistants to the budget.

Items mentioned were block scheduling at the high school, future projections of student population, the amount of impact aid received, and education expenditures.

Rep. Ebbin commented that members should be concerned with providing the best education the Town can afford to the children of our community. She reported that as the national fertility declines and the average age increases, it becomes more important that our children are competitive in the world market.

Rep. Bauer agreed with Rep. Ebbin in providing the best education we can afford.

Rep. Trejo stated he will support the first amendment of \$70,000,000. He agrees with Rep. Fairbank's rationale and expressed his displeasure with the attack on the RTM Education Committee this evening and in past years.

Rep. Power noted that the figures approved by the Town Council and committee are increases to

the BOE budget over last year.

Rep. Granatosky requested a Democratic caucus.

The Moderator declared a recess at 8:01 p.m. and the meeting resumed at 8:19 p.m.

The Moderator announced that a roll call vote had been requested and explained that the second amendment on the floor would be voted on first.

Rep. Smuts, a member of the Education Committee, stated that she would support the first amendment figure of \$70,000,000 but nothing lower than that since Town operations is increasing by 3.7 percent. She mentioned that several surrounding towns have approved significantly higher percentage increases for their BOE budgets and that she feels that a 2.8 increase does not reflect well on the Town.

In response to Rep. Newsome, Dr. Mitchell explained that the increase in the cost for busing is due to the fact that all students will be bused to the Catherine Kolnaski School and that a majority of students from Eastern Point School had been walkers due to its proximity to two large apartment complexes. He noted that Noank School students are being bused directly from home to Colonel Ledyard School until Northeast Academy is opened and new routes are established.

Rep. Granatosky clarified that none of the figures on the floor reflect a four percent increase for the BOE budget.

The vote on the amendment of \$69,681,230 was defeated 12 in favor, 23 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Miner, Monteiro, Moulding, Newsome, Power, Pratt, Scussel, Steere, Steinfeld, Streeter, Thunberg, Vivirito. Opposed: Reps. Baril, Bartinik, Bauer, Collins, Ebbin, Evered, Fairbank, Garcia, Granatosky, Harrell, Jenkins, McCarthy, Metayer, Patterson, Peruzzotti, Smuts, Stein, Svencer, Tilney, Trejo, Walker, Wheeler, Billing.)

The vote on the amendment of \$70,000,000 carried 26 in favor, 9 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Baril, Bartinik, Bauer, Collins, Ebbin, Evered, Fairbank, Garcia, Granatosky, Harrell, Jenkins, McCarthy, Metayer, Miner, Monteiro, Moulding, Patterson, Peruzzotti, Smuts, Stein, Svencer, Tilney, Trejo, Walker, Wheeler, Billing. Opposed: Reps. Newsome, Power, Pratt, Scussel, Steere, Steinfeld, Streeter, Thunberg, Vivirito.)

Capital Item - Groton Heights School

A motion for \$0 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Patterson, seconded by Rep. Power. In response to Rep. Collins, Mr. Greenleaf stated that the school is scheduled to be closed in August 2007.

The vote for \$0 carried 34 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Granatosky.)

Capital Item - S.B. Butler School

A motion for \$400,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Patterson, seconded by Rep. Garcia.

Items discussed were the scope of this project, the impact of future renovations, and the useful life of this school.

The vote on \$400,000 carried 31 in favor, 4 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Moulding, Thunberg, Vivirito, Billing.)

Capital Item - Cutler Middle School

A motion for \$440,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Patterson, seconded by Rep. Garcia.

In response to Rep. Evered, the Town Manager explained that \$40,000 was not previously approved for boiler design. He stated that discussion had occurred when the boiler broke down, but interim repairs were accomplished so a replacement could be installed when school is not in session.

Items discussed were studies for design and architectural services, the timeline for renovations of

this school, and the reuse of the new boilers.

Superintendent of Building and Grounds Wes Greenleaf explained that the new boiler would be incorporated in any future renovations. He stated that the existing boiler was installed in the 1950's and that parts are almost non-existent.

Rep. Moulding expressed his frustration that the School Design Committee Phase II has not completed a plan prior to these budget deliberations.

Dr. Mitchell confirmed that Cutler Middle School will remain open.

The vote on \$440,000 carried unanimously.

A motion to adjourn at 8:43 p.m. to a time definite Thursday May 17, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. was made by Rep. Trejo, seconded by Rep. Fairbank and so voted unanimously.

Budget Session - Thursday May 17, 2007

Moderator Natalie Billing called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

29 members were present, and a quorum was declared. (Rep. Monteiro arrived later.)

The Moderator reported that Reps. Bauer, Cerf, McMahon, Monteiro, Post, Schefers, Sebastian, Steere called to say that they are unable to attend this meeting.

Members Present: Moderator Billing, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bartnik, Rep. Collins, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Evered, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Metayer, Rep. Miner, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Power, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Trejo, Rep. Vivirito, Rep. Walker, Sr. and Rep. Wheeler, Jr.

Members Absent: Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Garcia, Rep. McMahon, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Post, Rep. Schefers, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Steere and Rep. Tilney

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Parks & Recreation Director John Silsby, Parks & Recreation staff, Groton Library Director Alan Benkert, Bill Memorial Library Director Hali Keeler, Mystic & Noank Library Director Joanna Case, board members from the three libraries, Deputy Town Clerk Janet Downs, and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

Moderator Billing announced a change concerning the referral mentioned at the previous session. She stated that the referral for the Reappropriation of the Capital Improvements Funds for the air conditioning at Fitch High School, is reassigned to the Finance Committee.

Community & Economic Development Committee

Chairman Vivirito reported that the minutes were accepted on May 3, 2007. He read the portion of the minutes pertinent to the accounts on this schedule.

Account 1063 - Groton Public Library

A motion for \$1,868,562 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Baril.

The vote on \$1,868,562 carried 27 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Smuts.)

Account 3310 - Connecticard

A motion for \$29,576 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Fairbank and so voted unanimously.

Account 10650 - Mystic & Noank Library

A motion for \$200,658 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Power.

Items discussed were the percentage of usage by the Towns of Groton and Stonington, the funding requested by the library, and the amount of funding approved by the Town of Stonington.

Mystic & Noank Library Director Joanna Case reported that the Town of Stonington's funding did

not increase from last year's amount. She stated that services will not be impacted since the Board has agreed to use additional endowment funds.

In response to Rep. Power, the Moderator suggested that the RTM may want to consider drafting a letter to the Town of Stonington encouraging them to contribute their fair share to this library. Rep. Smuts praised the services that are provided by the Mystic & Noank Library.

The vote on \$200,658 carried unanimously.

Account 10651 - Bill Memorial Library

A motion for \$17,500 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Total for Account 1065 - Other Libraries \$218,158

Recreation Committee

Chairman Power read the minutes of the meeting held on April 30, 2007. (Minutes are file.)

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Collins and so voted unanimously.

Account 1064 - Parks & Recreation

A motion for \$2,532,108 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Smuts.

In response to Rep. Steinfeld, Parks and Recreation Director John Silsby reported that the Parks and Recreation Commission is meeting with Esker Point residents to review their concerns about the summer concert series.

In response to Rep. Ebbin's concerns about the "unsavory" activities that occur at Pequot Woods, Mr. Silsby reported that the Commission and Police Department are aware of these activities. He stated that the Police Department is addressing this ongoing issue.

The vote on \$2,532,108 carried unanimously.

Account 2010 - Shennecossett Golf Course

A motion for \$1,138,790 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Peruzzotti.

Members discussed the Manager's recommendation to absolve a \$192,000 loan from FYE 2002 and 2003 that was approved by the Town Council and RTM for a number of CIP projects. The Manager explained that his rationale was based on insufficient revenues from the golf course to pay off this loan in a timely manner. He noted that the golf course revenue does pay for operations but is not able to fund debt payments or future CIP projects on the buildings or the course. He cited a slump in revenues after the golf course land exchange, a drop in memberships and several new golf courses opening in this region. He reminded members that he was not the manager at the time this occurred.

Rep. Vivirito expressed his concern over the impression given to taxpayers by forgiveness of this loan. He stated that it is a bad precedent to set and feels that the loan should be paid off.

Rep. Granatosky believes that this is a policy issue and doesn't affect the account figure.

Responding to Rep. Granatosky's question, the Manager noted that the proposed budget reflects the Town's intention to forgive this loan.

Rep. Granatosky feels that the RTM approval was granted for a loan and that the loan should be repaid.

In response to Rep. Miner, the Town Manager explained that a \$52,000 operating deficit did occur in FY 2003 and that the golf course has been making payments each year. He mentioned that last year the Town Council and RTM approved a \$45,743 payment from other funds that was applied to this deficit and is reflected in the budget.

Moderator Billing announced that she was stepping down from the podium in order to comment on this item, and Rep. Vivirito was Moderator Pro Tem for the remainder of discussion on this

account.

Rep. Billing commented that she was a RTM member when the loan was approved. She stated it was controversial and was approved only as a loan. She feels uncomfortable approving a change after the fact and cautioned members to think how they may feel if the conditions under which they approved an item were changed a few years later.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$1,138,790 with the condition that the RTM does not agree with the statement that the debt of \$192,125 be waived or abated was made by Rep. Billing, seconded by Rep. Trejo.

Rep. Billing stated she does not have a problem if the debt is not paid off for ten or fifteen years, but feels it is important that the record reflects how the account was approved.

In response to Rep. Fairbank, the Town Manager stated that one debt is for an operating cost deficit in 2003, and that the capital loan being discussed is for several CIP projects that were approved using money that was a loan from the General Fund.

In response to Rep. Peruzzotti, the Finance Director stated that the two loans from 2002 & 2003 have been reduced to \$192,000. He feels that this year the budget has only enough money for operating costs. He noted that last year revenue was enough to apply some of it to the operating deficit loan and he hopes that loan will be paid off this year if revenues reach the projected amount.

The vote on the figure of \$1,138,790 with the condition that the RTM does not agree with the statement that the debt of \$192,125 be waived or abated carried 23 in favor, 5 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Peruzzotti, Pratt, Smuts, Scussel, Steinfeld.)

Moderator Billing resumed chairing of the meeting.

Account 3260 - Community Events

A motion for \$0 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Svencer. It was explained that there are no events to be funded from this account.

The motion for \$0 carried unanimously.

Capital Item - Park Improvement Plan

A motion for \$60,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Peruzzotti and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Open Space Acquisition and Development

A motion for \$25,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Collins.

The vote on \$25,000 carried 27 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Peruzzotti.)

Capital Item - Golf Course Improvements

A motion for \$60,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Scussel.

(Rep. Monteiro arrived at this time.)

The vote on \$60,000 carried 28 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Smuts.)

Capital Item - William Seely School

A motion for \$25,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Baril.

Items discussed were the causes for the flaking paint, the impact to activities while painting is done, facility usage, and asbestos abatement.

Mr. Oefinger reported that all asbestos floor tiles have been removed in the front portion of the

building.

The vote on \$25,000 carried unanimously.

The Moderator called for a brief recess at 8:00 p.m. The meeting resumed at 8:14 p.m.

Finance Committee

Chairman Granatosky noted that the minutes were approved on May 3, 2007.

Account 5010 - Capital Reserve Fund

A motion for \$3,850,000 was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Svencer. Rep. Granatosky noted that the difference from the Manager's figure is due to the following RTM reductions: Groton Heights School \$40,000; Jabez Smith House \$30,000; Vacated School/Properties-reuse \$40,000.

The vote on \$3,850,000 carried unanimously.

Account 1075 - Capital Reserve (contribution)

A motion for \$1,600,000 made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Fairbank and so voted unanimously.

Account 1076 - Debt Service

A motion for \$4,192,780 was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Account 1077 - Contributions to Other Funds

A motion for \$175,042 was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Miner. In response to Rep. Ebbin, the Town Manager explained that this transfer to the golf course account has nothing to do with the CIP golf course loan but is for the golf course operating debt. The Moderator explained that RTM action taken on the golf course fund approved the General Fund contributing \$30,000 to the golf course fund.

The vote on \$175,042 carried unanimously.

Account 2060 - Mumford Cove

A motion for \$10,702 was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Svencer. The Moderator explained that this is fire protection tax for Mumford Cove.

The vote on \$10,702 carried 28 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Baril.)

Account 4010 - Groton Sewer District

A motion for \$1,043,767 was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Fairbank. The Moderator stated that this money is raised in part by Sewer District taxes.

The vote on \$1,043,767 carried unanimously.

Account 1074 - Contingency

A motion for \$350,000 was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

H. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. was made by Rep. Trejo, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Attest:

*Barbara Tarbox, Town Clerk
Clerk of the RTM*

Sally A. Whitney, Assistant Town Clerk